



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE**

FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 West 15th Street, Suite 3200
HELENA, MT 59626-0096
Phone 866-457-2690
<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

May 4, 2015

Ref: 8MO

Jon Kenning, Chief
Water Protection Bureau
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: Comments on Permit MT0021938, City of Kalispell Wastewater Treatment Plant

Dear Mr. Kenning:

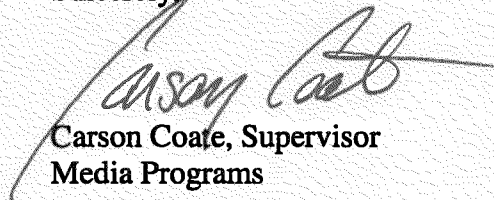
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the draft permit and fact sheet for the City of Kalispell Wastewater Treatment Plant, MT0021938, and has the following comments:

1. There appears to be a typo in Total Nitrogen Average Monthly Limit in Tables 9 and 10 of the Fact Sheet, which says 286 lb/day. The limit discussed in the Fact Sheet and presented in the permit is 378 lb/day.
2. Table 11 in the Fact Sheet is missing the monitoring requirement for dissolved oxygen saturation.
3. The nutrient discussion on page 13-15 of the Fact Sheet mentions the basis for the current total nitrogen limit relative to the proposed limit, which allows for an increase, and that this change prevents a decline in water quality; the linkage to how this complies with Montana's non-degradation rules (ARM 17.30.701 – 718) and how it falls within the anti-backsliding exceptions in § 402 of the Clean Water Act [33 U.S.C. § 1342] needs to be clarified.
4. EPA supports DEQ in its WET permitting decisions for the City of Kalispell permit. The move to chronic monitoring for the facility, based on dilution, is in line with EPA guidance for WET testing and will assist the DEQ with protecting the salmonid propagation listing of the receiving stream. EPA's remaining comments are provided to assist the DEQ with clarifications regarding chronic WET testing and the permit language.

5. The use of compositing for the WET test for the chronic test should be further explained in the fact sheet, with specifics provided in the permit, to ensure that proper sampling methods are understood. The composite sampling requirements needs to ensure that samples are refrigerated during compositing at 0 to 6 degrees and should specify frequency of composite draw.
6. References in the permit to the "Region VIII NPDES Whole Effluent Toxics Control Program, August 1997" need to be removed. The permittee must follow regulatory requirements as specified in the permit and regulations.
7. The use of CO₂ overlays to control pH is not explained in the fact sheet and therefore is not warranted. If CO₂ overlays were allowed in previous permitting to control pH creep and limit ammonia toxicity, the permit must contain an ammonia limitation. CO₂ overlays should be removed from the permit until toxicity to organisms in the chronic test can be determined and limited based on 122.44(d)(1)(v) & (vi).
8. The following verbiage should be modified: "The format for the laboratory report shall be consistent with the latest revision of Region VIII Guidance for Whole Effluent Reporting, and shall include all chemical and physical data as specified." Region 8 has a suggested format for reporting that DEQ can use and can attach to the permit to ensure the permittee and laboratory use the correct updated suggested reporting format.
9. EPA strongly recommends the use of 10 data points for consideration of reduction in monitoring instead of the four quarters recommended in the draft permit. Additionally, the reduction to alternating species is not recommended. WET test species used in tests respond to different contaminants in effluents. EPA recommends further monitoring reductions for WET testing be based on 10 data points and, if warranted, testing be reduced to bi-annually (spring and fall) on both species not alternating species.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Kusnierz at 457-5001, or by e-mail at kusnierz.lisa@epa.gov.

Sincerely,


Carson Coate, Supervisor
Media Programs



Printed on Recycled Paper



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE**

FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 West 15th Street, Suite 3200
HELENA, MT 59626-0096
Phone 866-457-2690
<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

May 4, 2015

Ref: 8MO

Jon Kenning, Chief
Water Protection Bureau
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: Comments on Permit MT0020184, City of Whitefish Wastewater Treatment Facility

Dear Mr. Kenning:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the draft permit and fact sheet for City of Whitefish Wastewater Treatment Facility, MT0020184, and has the following comments:


1. The Fact Sheet states the non-degradation load allocations calculated for the 1994 permit were being removed from this permit because they were calculated using a 1994 guidance and were not based on § 17.30.715 ARM or water quality standards. The Fact Sheet lists the nondegradation load allocations under the Technology Based Effluent Limits (TBELs) section. TBELs fall under the anti-backsliding regulations at 40 CFR § 122.44(l) and cannot be lesser than effluent limits, standards and conditions in the previous permit. Please clarify how the reasons for removal of the nondegradation load allocation fall within the anti-backsliding exceptions in § 402 of the Clean Water Act [33 U.S.C. § 1342].
2. The following comments are provided to assist the DEQ with implementation of NPDES regulations pertaining to WET testing. As the permit is currently written, the EPA does not support the WET determinations made in the City of Whitefish permit for the following reasons.
3. The Fact Sheet does not clearly describe the dilution ratios of the effluent to the receiving stream as they pertain to WET. The numbers provided in the Fact Sheet indicate that the facility is at 2.1 mgd max daily and USGS stream data indicates 13.0 as the receiving stream flow. This puts the dilution ratio at roughly 1:6 and the City of Whitefish should be required to perform chronic WET testing. This consideration is based on EPA TSD guidance for WET test selection, as well as past DEQ policies on WET test determinations, however the permit Fact Sheet does not provide this as part of the monitoring and limitation considerations.
4. The facility has had multiple acute WET test failures, the DEQ can opt to require the facility to move directly to a TIE/TRE to confirm preliminary consideration that ammonia contributed to

the WET failures in addition to the suggested change to chronic WET testing requirements. A compliance schedule is recommended in the permit to ensure that the facility comply with identification of the toxicant causing WET failures.

5. The permit language is out of date, references to WET testing manuals are for the EPA 600 series manuals and not the EPA 821 manuals published in 2002. In addition to requiring chronic WET testing for the City of Whitefish permit, the Permit and Fact Sheet need to address acute failures, dilution ratios, impairment of the stream, and 'growth and propagation of salmonid fishes' requirements listed in the Fact Sheet.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Kusnierz at 457-5001, or by e-mail at kusnierz.lisa@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



Carson Coate, Supervisor
Media Programs



Printed on Recycled Paper



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE**

FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 West 15th Street, Suite 3200

HELENA, MT 59626-0096

Phone 866-457-2690

<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

May 4, 2015

Ref: 8MO

Jon Kenning, Chief
Water Protection Bureau
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: Comments on Permit MT0022705, Gardiner Wastewater Treatment Facility


Dear Mr. Kenning:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the draft permit and fact sheet for Gardiner Wastewater Treatment Facility, MT0022705, and has the following comments:

1. A mixing zone is provided for nitrate + nitrite and the Fact Sheet states that dilution is needed to achieve the standard. However, it does not appear a mixing zone is necessary for this reason because the reasonable potential analysis shows the critical effluent concentration is 1.63 mg/L, which is well below the human health standard of 10 mg/L.
2. As specified in § 122.48(b), all permits shall require monitoring that yields representative data. Particularly given the variability in Gardiner's wastewater, the EPA recommends requiring composite sampling for nutrient and metals in the effluent instead of grab sampling.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Kusnierz at 457-5001, or by e-mail at kusnierz.lisa@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



Carson Coate, Supervisor
Media Programs



Printed on Recycled Paper

